

REMARKS

Claims 9-15 were earlier canceled in response to a restriction requirement dated March 24, 2003. Therefore claims 1-8, 16 and 17 remain in the instant application and are presented for reconsideration. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected independent claims 1 and 16 under 35 USC §102(e) as being anticipated by Ahearn et al. (US Patent No. 5,926,463). In addition, claims 2-8 and 17 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ahearn in view of Andersson et al. (US Patent No. 6,163,544). By way of this amendment, independent claims 1, 3, 16 and 17 have been amended and all rejections traversed. Applicant respectfully suggests that all claims are now allowable in view of the accompanying amendment and remarks.

Amendment to the Claims

Claims 1, 3, 16 and 17 have been amended to more clearly distinguish embodiments of the present invention. In particular, independent claims 1, 3, 16 and 17 are amended to include "customer centric" before network. And, claims 1, 16 and 17 further include a "generic information model" database. With the above amendments, all independent claims now contain "customer centric network management" and "generic information model" as limitations. Support for these amendments can be found in at least the following portions of the specification: Fig. 1, page 2, lines 6-7, page 3, line 14, page 7, lines 13-19, page 8, line 3 and line 12. As such, no new matter has been added by way of these claim amendments.

35 USC §102(e) Rejection

Claims 1 and 16 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Ahearn. Applicant's independent claim 1 and 16 are directed to, among other things, "a method for customer centric network management comprising the steps, performed by a processor, of: receiving identification data corresponding to a customer in a network; accessing a generic information model database for stored information corresponding to the customer identification data; and providing actual circuit path information corresponding to a customer service based on the stored information" (emphasis added).

In contrast to Applicant's claimed subject matter, Ahearn discloses a method for collecting database information from devices in a network in order to present views that are beneficial to a network manager (col. 3, lines 7-8 and lines 34-36). In particular, Ahearn discusses at length the importance of presenting a "network manager", or network supervisor, with various views of the network to facilitate diagnosis of problems (col. 3, lines 25-30 and lines 41-44, col. 4, lines 22-24).

Ahearn fails to disclose "customer centric" network management in which only the customer, and not a network manager, sees network information relevant to its position within the network. Furthermore, while Ahearn discusses databases in conjunction with presenting information to a network manager, it is silent with respect to a "generic information model database" used in connection with providing customer centric network management data to a customer on the network.

A valid 35 USC §102 rejection requires that the reference teach every element of Applicant's claimed invention. Since Ahearn fails to teach at least the elements of claims 1 and 16 addressed above, Applicant requests that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn and that claims 1 and 16 be allowed.

35 USC §103(a) Rejection

The Office Action rejected dependent claims 2, and 4-8 and independent claims 3 and 17 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ahearn in view of Andersson. Applicant traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons. First, Ahearn fails to teach or suggest limitations of independent claims 1, 3, and 17 such as, for example, "a method for customer centric network management" and "a generic information model database" used in conjunction with the method for allowing only a customer to view only those portions of the network used to convey information to it.

Second, Andersson, alone or in combination with Ahearn, fails to remedy the deficiencies of Ahearn such that a valid 35 §103(a) rejection cannot be sustained. Andersson is directed to a generic information model used in telecommunication networks (abstract). This is not equivalent to Applicant's "generic information model database". In particular, Andersson makes it easier for a network operator to add devices to, or monitor, a telecommunications network by using a generic information model for handling interfaces to individual components in the network (col.3, lines 15-20, lines 21-24, lines 25-29, and lines 43-46). Andersson, like Ahearn, provides a tool directed to a network operator, or manager, and not to a customer on the network. As

such, Andersson taken alone or in combination with Ahearn, does not disclose or suggest the subject matter of independent claims 1, 3 and 17. Applicant respectfully requests that the 35 USC §103(a) rejection of these claims be withdrawn and the claims allowed. Dependent claims 2, and 4-8 are also believed allowable for the reasons argued in connection with claims 1 and 3, respectively.

CONCLUSION

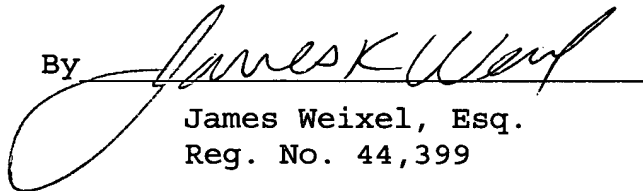
In view of Applicant's arguments given in response to the 35 USC §102(e) rejection of claims 1 and 16 and the 35 USC §103(a) rejection of claims 2-8 and 17, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections be withdrawn. All claims are believed allowable in view of the remarks and claim amendments presented hereinabove. Reconsideration and allowance of all claims is earnestly requested.

It is believed that any additional fees due with respect to this paper have already been identified in any transmittal accompanying this amendment. However, if any additional fees are required in connection with the filing of this paper that are not identified in any accompanying transmittal, permission is given to charge account number 07-2339. If the Examiner has any questions or comments, he is kindly urged to call the undersigned to facilitate prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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